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JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL

DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONNEL GS-9 AND ABOVE UNDER AGE 30

GENERAL

The May 1963 Special Report was concerned with the relatively small number of staff employees who will become eligible for optional retirement during the next five years. This month's report takes a look at the other end of the age profile, with particular reference to the general trend during the past five years toward a decrease in numbers of Junior Professional Personnel.

ASSUMPTIONS

- a. The large majority of personnel grade GS-9 and above are professional.
- b. Overall requirements for personnel grade GS-9 and above remained relatively constant between December 1958 and December 1962 and the requirements for Junior Professional Personnel under age 30 in this group are no less now than they were in 1958.

(For the purpose of this study it was not considered feasible to expend the effort which would be required to make more specific delineations between professional and clerical than considering grade GS-9 and above personnel as professional. The Office of Communications was not included in this study inasmuch as there are a large number of non-professional personnel at grade GS-9 (Commo Techs) in that office.)

TABLES

TAB A - Comparison of Junior Professional Personnel (GS-9 and above under age 30) as of each December 31 during five year period from 1958 through 1962 and the percentage this number represents of the total grade GS-9 population for the major Career Service Groups and the Foreign Service Corp.

TAB B - Sources of grade GS-9 and above age 30 or under Personnel FY 1960-61-62

TAB C - Promotions of Personnel to Grade GS-9 FY 1960-61-62

CHARTS

(All charts are as of 31 December 62 except the Foreign Service Officer chart which is as of 30 June 62.)

TAB D - Grade GS-9 thru GS-18 Staff Personnel by year of age - Agency

TAB E - Grade GS-9 thru GS-18 Staff Personnel by year of age - Intelligence.

TAB F - Grade GS-9 thru GS-18 Staff Personnel by year of age - Support.

TAB G - Grade GS-9 thru GS-18 Staff Personnel by year of age - CSCS.

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TAB H - Foreign Service Officers FSO-8 thru FSO-1 and including CM and CA.

OBSERVATIONS

During the years 1958 through 1962 there has been a sharply decreasing trend in the numbers of professional personnel under 30 years of age.

It appears that a considerable number of people who were not hired initially under highly competitive professional entrance requirements eventually move into professional positions through promotion up.

Generally the percentage of personnel grade GS-9 and under 30 years of age has decreased annually.

There were 40% fewer professionals under age 30 on December 31, 1962 than there were on December 31, 1958.

There has been a relatively small input of professionals into the Agency through direct new hire or into a major directorate through reassignment from other career services.

Considerably less than half of the people promoted to GS-9 during FY's 1960-61-62 were under age 30.

A large concentration of the professional personnel of the CSCS and of the Agency are between the ages of 35 and 45. However, in the Support and Intelligence Career Services, they are spread more generally between the ages of 30 to 50.

Foreign Service Officers are spread fairly generally between the ages 25 to 50.

CONCLUSIONS

For some years, CIA age distribution studies have shown that a rather high proportion of our professional employees fit into a fairly narrow age span - the familiar "hump" so often discussed in this and other agencies and which at the moment finds the major concentration of CIA professionals in the 35-45 age bracket.

Despite our awareness of the "hump" (and the even more significant "valley" that follows it), we nevertheless seem to be doing very little about it. In fact, during the past 5 years, since the first concerns about this problem were voiced, the "hump" has steadily grown more prominent (and likewise the "valley" behind it). For in that period we have witnessed: (1) the virtual disappearance of professionals over age 62 (as a result of new retirement policies), and (2) a sharp downward trend in the numbers and also the proportions of young professionals on duty.

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This latter trend should be a matter of very real concern. Because, besides its adverse influence on the age distribution problem, our failure to hire sufficient numbers of young professionals to fill positions intended for them is probably leaving still another serious problem in its wake. For these positions do not remain unfilled. And preliminary evidence (which a forthcoming study will probe) strongly suggests that all too often the new incumbents move up from clerical ranks on a non-competitive basis without being required to furnish adequate proof of professional skills and abilities.

What should we do, and what are we doing, about our shortage of young professionals?

One thing is clear: we cannot delay the solutions much longer. The processes of time have already transformed a young work force into an essentially middle-aged one and are moving us inexorably toward even greater maturity - this for a group which has long prided itself on its youthful vigor and resilience. And early retirement legislation, if passed, will add a special note of urgency to our solutions for those components most affected - especially DD/P which, in addition to bearing the brunt of early retirement, also has the greatest shortage of young professionals as well as the longest lead time for developing new recruits into adequate replacements for outgoing professionals.

So where do we go from here?

Well, in the first place, our solutions should be designed to meet the individual requirements of the various career services. These differ - being most acute in the DD/P and least acute in the DD/I. But the shortage of young professionals is serious in virtually every service. To meet these shortages, we need a greatly expanded effort to hire young professionals under 30, coupled with a companion program for the lateral entry of substantial numbers of professionals primarily between the ages of 30 and 35 - the precise numbers in each category to be worked out with each career service on the basis of its projected manpower requirements.

These solutions cannot be achieved however without a number of changes in long-standing practices. They require: (1) the willingness to accept far larger numbers of young professionals from outside the Agency, (2) the readiness to provide adequate formal training for the greatly increased numbers of such recruits, and (3) hard-nosed attitudes about qualification standards for clerical employees aspiring to become professionals. But most of all, the solutions require a sense of urgency - a reaction amply justified by the somber facts before us here.

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